

American Geographical Society

Guillaume Boucher: A French Artist at the Court of the Khans by Leonardo Olschki
Geographical Review, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Jan., 1948), pp. 172-173

Published by: [American Geographical Society](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/210762>

Accessed: 09/05/2014 09:57

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the section between Barnaul and the Kuznetsk Basin is still under construction. Similarly, he refers to the "rejuvenated" Mariinsk Waterway system as though this major improvement had already been carried through, which is not the case. The figure (p. 211) of 100 million tons of freight loaded on inland-waterway vessels in 1937 is far too high; it should be 66.9 million. The "Gigant" state farm is said to have an area of 200,000 hectares (p. 150); this was true at one time, but in the middle 1930's it and several other large state farms were broken up; 25,000 hectares is now the maximum size of farms of this type. A more serious defect is the absence of the Baltic States from the survey; this is curious in view of the fact that the part of Poland annexed to the Ukraine is treated.

But these are all minor faults and will not lessen the value of this outstanding work.

This reviewer's first reaction after reading Alfred Fichelle's "*Géographie physique et économique de l'U.R.S.S.*" was that the French reading public is fortunate that it does not have to depend on this book for knowledge of the geography of the U.S.S.R. It lacks every one of the qualities that distinguish M. Jorré's volume—balance, objectivity, comprehensiveness, discrimination. It is thoroughly unreliable; to list the errors and misconceptions it contains would require many pages.

One cannot avoid the impression that if this book is not itself propaganda, the author has been extraordinarily careless in distinguishing between Soviet fact and fiction.—J. A. MORRISON

GUILLAUME BOUCHER: A French Artist at the Court of the Khans. By LEONARDO OLSCHKI. ix and 125 pp.; map, ills., index. The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1946. \$2.50. 8¾ x 5½ inches.

At first thought it might seem little more than a historical curiosity that Friar William of Rubruck, the famous predecessor of Marco Polo, should have found at Karakorum, the Mongol capital, a Parisian goldsmith, Guillaume Boucher by name, busily engaged in his craft under the full favor of the Great Khan Mangu himself. With comprehensive and ingenious scholarship Dr. Olschki uses the somewhat meager information that Friar William recorded about this versatile artist to open up wide vistas upon the cultural history and cultural geography of medieval Asia.

During the first half of the thirteenth century French influence was powerful in Hungary. Boucher had been one of a group of French ecclesiastics, architects, and craftsmen resident in Belgrade, which then belonged to the kingdom of Hungary. When the Mongol hordes occupied the Middle Danube in 1241–1242, he was taken prisoner and, together with a few other Franks, was sent as a slave across Asia to Karakorum. That he there gained the favor of the Khan is attributed partly to the tolerant attitude of the Mongol rulers toward the many religious sects represented in their immense domain, partly to their friendship with the Franks as potential allies against the Saracens, and partly to their need of skilled craftsmen—lacking among the rude Mongols—for employment in the adorning of a capital worthy of their claim to world sovereignty.

Boucher's most ambitious task, undertaken at the command of the emperor, was to design and direct the construction by fifty workmen of a "magic fountain." As described in detail by Rubruck, this amazing device took the form of a silver tree furnished with conduits that poured forth mare's milk and four different kinds of intoxicating liquor. This "forgotten prototype of modern prosaic drug-store fountains turns out to be one of the most attractive

and significant monuments of thirteenth-century Asia." Dr. Olschki devotes some sixty pages to its interpretation in relation to the adoration of the khan as a divinity (held to be of Western Asiatic or Byzantine, rather than Chinese, origin), to the ceremonial drunkenness associated with the emperor worship, to the cult of trees and its widespread manifestations (the four outlets of the fountain are suggestive, for example, of the four rivers of Paradise), and to the development and spread of technical and mechanical skills in medieval time.

Boucher also made various religious articles—a crucifix, a pyx, an image of the Virgin, and the like—for his Roman Catholic confreres at Karakorum, all in the purest French decorative style and "with no concession to the Asiatic environment." One of these, however, an oratory or chapel mounted on wheels, was certainly "suggested by the circumstance that the small Roman Catholic community of the capital was composed of people more or less connected with the usages of the court and consequently obliged to accept and follow the roving life of their masters. The emperor and the nobility of 'all the generations that live in felt tents' always avoided giving the impression of becoming sedentary. For the nomads of the steppes a prolonged or definitive settledness meant subjection, weakness, decadence. Every tent of a Mongolian camp had its carts in proportion to the owner's household and rank. Now a chapel-cart for Catholic devotion was added to the innumerable vehicles following the imperial wagon."

MARINER OF THE NORTH: The Life of Captain Bob Bartlett. By GEORGE PALMER PUTNAM. ix and 246 pp.; bibliogr., index. Duell, Sloan & Pearce, New York, 1947. \$3.50. 8¾ x 5½ inches.

Robert Abram Bartlett, better known as "Bob Bartlett" or "Captain Bob," was the greatest mariner of the frozen Arctic seas of this or any age. This first full-length biography is written by a lifelong friend, who made two of the most eventful of the Arctic cruises on Bob's beloved schooner, the *Effie M. Morrissey*.

His biographer conveniently divides Bartlett's career into three periods. The first lasted 30 years (1875-1905), while the future Arctic explorer was growing up in his Newfoundland home and taking part in many codfishing and sealing cruises off the Labrador coast. The second period, 12 years (1905-1917), was the glorious one. Bartlett was Peary's skipper and great lieutenant until the Pole was reached in 1909, then Stefansson's as commander of the *Karluk* on the Canadian Arctic Expedition of 1913-1914, and lastly he was in command of the Crocker Land relief expedition (MacMillan) of 1917. Throughout the closing period of his life (1917-1946) Bartlett was cruising to the North on the *Morrissey*, at first carrying exploring expeditions to the Arctic, later conducting each summer his educational Arctic cruises for American boys, followed by lectures during the winter.

The first two of these periods Bartlett himself has covered in his autobiography, "The Log of Bob Bartlett" (1928), and the first half of the latest one in a supplementary work, "Sails over Ice" (1934).

Captain Bob possessed a highly picturesque but most lovable personality, and his biographer has been successful in presenting this to his readers. Bob's frequent references to the Deity did not smack of profanity; they were aids to the forceful speech of which he was a master.

More than once Bob suffered shipwreck in the North, but the most thrilling of all his experiences was the successful first bringing home of the *Roosevelt* from the Arctic. Referring